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INFO RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE  
RUEAHLA/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 003537

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [MX](#)  
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR FBI DIRECTOR MUELLER

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Charles V. Barclay. Reason:  
1.4 (b), (d).

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Mission Mexico warmly welcomes you to Mexico City. With the imminent roll out of the Merida Initiative you are coming at an excellent time to discuss our bilateral law enforcement agenda and your visit will accentuate the importance we place on Mexico as a partner in the war on drugs and organized crime.

VIOLENCE CONTINUES UNABATED, PRESIDENT SEEKS RESULTS  
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[¶2.](#) (SBU) Drug-related violence in Mexico continues unabated. There have been over 5,000 drug-related killings nationwide this year, with 669 in October alone, including 71 military and law enforcement officers. The scope of violence is, at least in part, evidence that Calderon's aggressive push against the cartels is having some effect. However, this is small comfort to Mexican citizens who are fed up with the climate of fear and insecurity that pervades here.

[¶3.](#) (C) Mexico's president needs to demonstrate concrete evidence that his efforts are disrupting cartel business operations and their capacity to further undermine Mexico's security. He faces major structural hurdles, however. His demoralized police remain outgunned, and generally intimidated by the cartels. Security elements are suspicious of each other and reluctant to cooperate and share information. Mexico's federal system makes it difficult for law enforcement elements (merely five percent of the country's police) to insert themselves into state jurisdictions. Within Mexico's dysfunctional judiciary, 90-95 percent of crimes do not result in convictions and the average trial lasts over eight months.

[¶4.](#) (U) President Calderon has responded by deploying Mexico's military to assist in fighting the cartels, allowing him to mount major anti-drug operations in ten states. He has raised pay for the military and replaced a number of high-ranking federal police officers in an anti-corruption campaign. He has increased the budget of the security forces each year since he took office, including a dramatic increase in the current budget. And he is pushing legislation through Congress that will introduce oral trials in Mexico for the first time, add provisions for plea bargaining, reorganize and rationalize federal policing and impose national standards on Mexico's disparate federal, state and local police forces.

[¶5.](#) (U) His efforts have produced results. In 2007 over 23,000 persons involved in drug-related crimes were arrested; over 17,000 have been incarcerated to date in 2008. Since the

beginning of the year over 11 metric tons of cocaine have been seized, as well as 750,000 kilos of marijuana and 160 kilos of methamphetamine. Arms seizures are also up, from 4,220 in 2006 to 8,877 in 2007 and 11,244 up to October 2008.

#### MERIDA INITIATIVE ROLLOUT

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¶6. (SBU) The U.S. is about to insert itself in a major way into this challenging environment with the impending rollout of the Merida Initiative. The \$400 million of the Merida Initiative includes a mix of funding administered by our Narcotics Affairs Section, Economic Support Funds administered by USAID, and Foreign Military Financing administered by the Office of Defense Cooperation. The package includes aviation support, non-intrusive inspection devices, communications and intelligence systems support, a robust judicial reform program, training and material support for specialized and vetted units, polygraph training and equipment, and continued support to expand Plataforma Mexico, a program that facilitates information and intelligence exchanges among the country's law enforcement agencies.

¶7. (SBU) We have negotiated the key parts of the Letter of Agreement for Merida with the GOM and we plan to sign it with the Mexicans on December 3. The NAS in Mexico City is staffing up to administer Merida and inter-agency coordination meetings are ongoing within the Law Enforcement Community to prepare for Merida roll out. Based on preliminary timelines there are projects which should begin to bear fruit by the end of the calendar year and by the spring most of the projects should be underway, although many are long term in nature and will not yield early results.

#### ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

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¶8. (C-Entire Paragraph) Several issues that may come up during your discussions are:

-- Merida Implementation: We expect Merida funding to be available in the coming weeks and Embassy officials will contact their counterparts to discuss project implementation. We appreciate President Calderon's willingness to partner with the U.S. and Central America on this initiative and will seek to gain the earliest impact from these funds. We will maintain full transparency and seek ongoing input from the GOM to ensure this package has the greatest impact on the ground.

-- Arms Trafficking: The flow of arms south will be on the mind of most of your interlocutors. We have a very active ICE and ATF team at post that are doing what they can to assist the GOM to improve its capacity to trace weapons and we are doing what we can on our side of the border to target weapons flowing south. But given the scale of the problem and the U.S. gun regime, this is not an issue that will be solved and the best we can do is try to hold the line.

--Extraditions: Cooperation during the Calderon administration has been outstanding, with more than 160 dangerous criminals being extradited to the U.S. in the past two years. Your GOM contacts should be congratulated on their efforts in this area and encouraged to pursue the many pending cases.

-- Southern Border: We continue to work closely with Mexico to strengthen its control of its southern border. You should praise GOM officials for their efforts in this area and assure them of continued U.S. technical assistance on southern border initiatives, and diplomatic support as we work together with Central America.

--Kidnappings: We recognize that kidnappings in Mexico have increased dramatically in recent years and are concerned as to their impact on US citizens, particularly living along our shared border. According to local media, more than 7,000

kidnappings will occur in 2008. We appreciate the GOM's cooperation in investigating kidnappings along the border, as well as those involving American citizens.

--SIAs: Mexican authorities are receptive to our concerns about potential infiltration by foreign groups and are stepping up security and surveillance when circumstances warrant; they are investigating special interest aliens and taking action against human trafficking and smuggling operations that might be exploited by terrorists. We are concerned by a 2007 procedural change (whereby SIA's are no longer detained in one central facility) that has complicated our ability to investigate and track such individuals, but appreciate the cooperation offered to CBP by senior Mexican migration officials to resolve this issue. Visit Mexico City's Classified Web Site at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/mexicocity> and the North American Partnership Blog at <http://www.intelink.gov/communities/state/nap/> / GARZA